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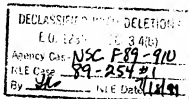
October 22, 1959

MEMORANDUM OF CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT  
October 16, 1959

Others present: Secretary Herter, Mr. Reinhardt, Mr.  
Merchant, Mr. Kohler, General Goodpaster

Mr. Herter said he had brought the group in to discuss summit meetings and trips with the President. He showed the President suggested letters to Adenauer, de Gaulle and Macmillan regarding a summit meeting in December. After reading the drafts the President thought we must stress that, until we know the West has achieved a concerted viewpoint on major problems, we cannot hold a summit meeting to consider these problems. He therefore asked whether we are thinking of making some kind of agreement on Berlin at a summit meeting; he asked what the State Department thinks we should do about Berlin. Mr. Herter thought our main aim should be to get Khrushchev to agree to put a moratorium on this issue for a couple of years. The President said he would have no objection to new measures in Berlin and Germany. He commented that, for example, it is time to pull out some of our forces now located in Europe. He cited the balance of payments difficulty the United States is experiencing at the present time. He thought we should get tough with Britain, Germany and France to get them to take up more of the load. Mr. Herter said there is some indication of British thinking of shifting from emphasis upon missiles and aircraft back toward conventional forces, although he doubted that they would increase their forces on the continent of Europe. The President suggested for example making the Europeans furnish the Commander for the European NATO Command, and simply leaving one of our divisions there. He commented that the United States, after all, paid for most of the air bases and other infrastructure, and has paid the whole cost of atomic weapons. He thought we should put no more military assistance into Europe. They are now able to support themselves.

Mr. Herter commented that Berlin is something of a symbol. It would be practical to cut our force in Berlin, but it should not appear



that we are being forced out by the Soviets. He thought that the best time to consider a cutback in forces would be in connection with disarmament talks.

The President asked why we could not, for the Western meeting, go to Geneva a few days ahead of a summit meeting. Mr. Merchant said it would be humiliating for Adenauer to be in Geneva for the Western meeting and then have to leave as the summit began. Paris would be better for the Western meeting.

The President asked again whether the State Department had any ideas concerning the substance of an interim agreement on Berlin. Mr. Herter replied that they think we should simply try to buy time. The President said that if we assume that the Soviets are not going to be so generous as this, we must then consider where we want to be for the next ten years. The East Germans can stop all economic connection with West Berlin. They could make West Berlin a dead weight on us. In his opinion, the Western world made a mistake in 1944 and 1945 and must now find a way to pay for it.

The President next asked as to meeting in Bonn rather than in Paris. Alternatively, he said it might be possible to have General de Gaulle here for his state visit in November, having Adenauer and Macmillan come here at the end of this visit for four-power talks, and having the Geneva meetings follow immediately. I pointed out that one complication is that de Gaulle feels committed to go to England first, and cannot visit there until after the Queen has had her baby next spring. The President suggested that the State Department people get word to Macmillan that the British should tell de Gaulle that, because of the Queen's condition, the British are not pushing their claim to have him visit Britain first. He said that what he really wants to find out is, while Germany is divided, what solution for Berlin would Adenauer accept. Mr. Herter said the Germans believe they might maintain the status quo with us supporting them. Mr. Merchant added that the Germans are showing themselves more and more rigid, with Adenauer less and less accessible, and with a consequent inability to negotiate. The President said this makes clear to him that we should have a Western summit meeting first to review all this and see if we can find any basis for going on to a summit meeting. Mr. Herter said that Couve de Murville had said to him in confidence that the British, French and U. S. should be talking about Adenauer; he is worried over

Adenauer's rigidity. The President said on this basis a period of two days just prior to a summit meeting would not be enough to concert Western views. Mr. Herter said he thought we should start up a working group on summit questions at once. The President agreed, but added that we obviously need to have some period of time between the two meetings, and should have a Western summit meeting as early as possible. He said he is thinking of the next six or seven years. Do we have anything to say concerning disarmament, an interim plan on Berlin, etc. He thinks we are being a little unrealistic and impractical in thinking merely of a moratorium.

Mr. Herter said he thought we could work out some kind of a status for a "guaranteed city" for West Berlin. He added that the Soviets probably will not let West Berlin become a part of West Germany.

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In further discussion the President said that we should have a Western summit meeting here in the next week if we are to be ready for a summit meeting in Geneva in December. He added that if we are simply going to stand on the status quo there is no reason for a summit meeting. He commented that he thought that he could strike a bargain on his own with Khrushchev if he were to try to do so, but he knew our allies would not accept his acting unilaterally. He said he thought the Foreign Ministers must come to Washington immediately and we must find out if there is any possibility of going to Geneva with an agreed program. Mr. Merchant said the West could agree quickly on a Berlin position based on a moratorium, but that Khrushchev would not accept it. (He commented that the British for some reason think that he would accept it, but no one else does.) The President recalled that he has not rigidly committed himself to a summit meeting. He sees no use in going to a summit meeting if we are simply exposing ourselves to insults by Khrushchev. He added that the U. S. should not have to take the primary part as regards European security measures. The European countries should do so. Mr. Herter said that the Germans want to be able to say that they had to yield to their allies.

The President acknowledged that we are in the situation where we have two million people in the middle of Eastern Germany, with responsibility for them resting right here. He would like to see how this could be resolved.

Mr. Herter said he could try to arrange a Foreign Ministers meeting. The President commented that if this is not done there should be a Western summit, with a prior state visit by de Gaulle if necessary. The shortest way would be to meet in London. In any case, this is the next essential. We would tell our allies that with all the many questions that exist concerning the summit, its timing, agenda, and differing viewpoints on major questions, it is of critical importance that there be a Western summit meeting at the earliest possible date. He said he would go within a week, or anytime thereafter. The only alternative he could see would be for the Foreign Ministers to meet in Bonn so that they would have access to Adenauer. While he would prefer to have the summit meeting here, he was prepared to go to Europe. He did not want to go to Bonn. After further discussion, it was agreed that Paris would be the most suitable spot. The President said this would be a strictly business meeting with no social affairs, no ceremonies, etc. The State Department group undertook to redraft the letters in the foregoing sense.

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